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If you're going out to party this weekend, forget it and go where there is something constructive to do. Go to your Gay social group meeting to send a wake up call, tell them that we are not all 'normal' boring, straight-acting and self-hating.

Let Hong Kong know that queers come in all shapes, sizes, genders, sexualities, and colours. Wear your best drag, whether sequins or leather, or wear nothing at all. It's liberation time, sisters and brothers, NOT assimilation time; that was last year's news at Stonewall (USA).

We must realise that the potential for real radical change in our movement. It is worth the long hard fight that it will take so that we create some hope for a human future based on love, diversity, and true liberation. For far too long, we have taken the 'right' road and prayed for acceptance by the 'normal' community. We believe that if we play by their rules, then our rights will come to us. If we 'clean up our act', we are told, then we can prove that we are 'normal'. We are just like straights, except for who we sleep with.

Just like them.

How quickly those who are in power forget that our people are made up of queens, butch Lesbians, Gay men, Bisexuals, Transsexuals, Lesbian femmes, queer anarchists, witches, queer punks, pagans and everyone else who is concerned with being themselves. Ridding our family of these "blemishes" will not get the homophobic hypocrites off our backs.

It's time to wake up and realise that those in power in the gay community are not interested in much else besides continuing the status quo. Next time anyone purports to say, I support Gay rights, ask them what action they have taken to back up their claims. Buying a tee-shirt, writing a cheque or attending a Tea Dance is a poor substitute for real physical action.

There are too many of us absorbed in the "lifestyles", and not enough people committed to creating any sort of future for our community. The purchase of Gay pride things does NOTHING to stop homophobia. They say the oppressed make the worst oppressors. It's working...

Sitting on our asses waiting for our rights will merely bring more of us closer to the obituary pages. Some of us will not be lucky enough to make it into the newspapers. They will die alone and afraid. Others will die from alcoholism, drug abuse, teenage suicide and loneliness. Much too much smoke and not enough fire.

Contacts Magazine

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Vol 3 Number 4

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Front Cover: ...And Man shall toil unto Eternity by Mandy Boursicot

Printed by Island Publishing Company Ltd.,
Hong Kong GPO Box 13427, Hong Kong

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教我如何不想他



種瓜得瓜，種豆得豆。這句老話在現今社會可能已經人間蒸發了。試問誰人可以獲得和他付出的相同數量。

如我，我為他付出了不知多少愛，到最後不獨得不到我希離渴望我可以擁有，相反連原來屬於自己的也失去。

到現在我還後悔將自己是同性戀者的秘密告訴浩然，更不應坦白地告訴他我喜歡他一事。但當時我除了走這條不歸路，還有其它路給我選擇嗎？話是這樣說，但我還是自責，自己是一名大傻瓜。

當浩然知道我是同性戀者後，他經常都會問我有關同性戀的問題。

有一次當我們在餐廳食飯時。

他突然問我「祥興，第一次是不是很痛？」

當時，我並沒有很留意他說的痛是什麼。

隨口便說「是呀，是很痛。」

說完後，我才知我說錯了話。因為浩然用很好奇的眼神瞪著我。我便意會到他說的痛，是我跟別人第一次肛交時痛不痛。我並沒有預料他會問我這麼私隱的問題，正如我不會問他你昨夜怎樣跟你的女朋友做愛的問題一樣。朋友還朋友，此終有一些問題是應該忌諱的。

我見他想再追問的樣子，便立即說「浩然，吃完飯去唱歌好嗎？」

他並沒有說好，但亦沒有說不，只是很用心地享受他的牛排。

雖然我每一次問浩然，你介不介意我是同性戀者，他始終說「不介意，我絕對沒有性別歧視，無論是同

性戀、雙性戀或是異性戀者，祇要他們是我的朋友，我便會一視同人地對待。絕無偏袒絕無歧視。」

他說時我可以肯定地說他是非常認真的，他並沒有說假話。不過，我的直覺告訴我他已經不是我從前所認識的李浩然了。

我喜歡自然。在家中，我甚少用冷氣機，連睡覺也沒有睡要；我喜歡將睡房的窗全部打開。我亦不喜歡關上窗簾，我比較喜歡晚上讓涼風從窗外吹來，讓它觸摸我身上每一個毛孔。早上，我亦不雖鬧鐘喚我起床，皆因晚上沒有關上窗簾，自然會有陽光弄醒我。

我是一個這麼愛好自然的人，正如我是一名同性戀者一樣，多數人都說違反自然，但我並不理會他們，我就覺得非常自然，我知身為一名同性戀者，並非壞事，亦沒有違反自然。因為我的心告訴我，可能你不信，但不重要；只要我自己心安理得便要足夠了。

正因為我實在太過信我自己的心了，所以今次浩然的事我並不能客觀地分析，應該怎樣處理。

今天雖然是假期，但我還是跟平常上班的時間起床。我有一個習慣，每天起床後，我都會花上半小時在我心愛的水族箱。

正如今天，我給了它們飼料後，便坐在安樂椅上看著它們來來回回地游來游去。這段時間，是我每一天最享受的，沒有人騷擾，沒有工作上的煩惱，只是專心看著心愛的魚兒在水族箱內來來回回，是多麼寫意。

可能你會不信，如沒人打擾，我可以坐坐水族箱前幾小時，不過，今天不可能了。

電話鈴響了。原來是浩然。他想去海灘游泳。

他說「祥興呀，今日天氣好，去海灘游泳好嗎？」

雖然我知道他喜歡我的機會差等於零，我還是高興浩然約會我，至少可以看到他俊秀的面孔。

我說「去海灘，倒不如到會所，又不用和別人擠。」

他卻說「不好，我喜歡去海灘。」

對我來說去那裏也一樣。

我說「好吧！去那個海灘呀？」

「我從雜誌知道，中灣是你們這一類人出現的地方。而且報導還說你們有些人穿的泳褲比女性比堅尼的布還少，我想去看看。」他還沒有停。繼續說「正所謂人一世，物一世，什麼稀奇古怪的事物也應該看看。」

我真的很想說我有其它事要辦，沒有時間，不去了。但我的嘴卻說反話「三十分鐘後在你樓下等。我來接你。」

連自己也不明白，為何要和浩然出街。可能愛是盲目的。

到達中灣後，今日比起其他的假日更加旺場，並沒有令浩然失望。他要看的比堅尼泳褲亦有人穿。

當他看到，便立即用手指著說「祥興，你看。那邊那男人，嘩他所穿的泳褲的布真少。前面的緊可掩蓋重要部位，後面更加大膽，只有一條繩。」

他看得很高興，亦說得眉飛色舞。不是說這男人膽旦，便說那個男人身材一流。好像他是一名選美評判。

但我並不開心，他每次問我這個男人怎樣，你喜不喜歡，我都很應酬式說是或是好。我借故說頭痛，要走。但他對這個海灘的興趣比我還濃，東張西望，直至我說第三次要走，他才依依不捨地跟著我離去。他真的變了。

在回家途中，他還不肯罷休，還滔滔不絕地說。我終於忍無可忍，沈著說「浩然，假如你不介意我想

靜靜，我真的很頭痛。」

他終於靜下來了，我可以專心地送他回家。

送完浩然回到自己家，我有一種被釋放的感覺。除此外我還感到孤獨和空虛。這些感受充塞我的腦袋。

雖然家中的陳列擺設和今早離開時完完全全沒有分別，我還坐在安樂椅上看著水族箱內的魚兒你追我逐，好不愉快。但我的心情卻來一個一百八十度的轉變，我的心好像並沒有跟我從中灣回來。

我望著窗外的日落餘輝，日落無異是吸引，但只時間太過短促了。這是否代表著我和浩然已經到了終結的時候呢？

我時常都問自己他對我的影響究竟有多大深？像今天，在接他電話前一刻我還好端端地享受著看魚的樂趣，但和他出外後，不單沒有暢快的感覺，反而帶回滿腦子的愁緒。

這是何時發生的呢？或許自我跟他說我是同性戀者後，他對我的態度便轉變了。或許他想從我處得到更多獨家新聞吧。

每次他問我同志間的問題時，他給我的感覺並不是想瞭解同性戀者，並不是一種關懷的表現，我所受到的是一種被利用的感覺。

有一次他更問我你們那類人真有趣，喜歡在洗手間玩。他說時還面露藐視的笑容。

在那一刻，我很想為我們同志辯護，我們並不如報章內所說的有性無愛，我們對愛是非常之珍惜的。但我沒有說；我不想為了他人而影響了我們之間的感情，我什麼也沒有說，只是笑笑。

可能因為每次他說同志們的評語時，我都沒有任何反應，以至他這種態度日益嚴重，有些時候更問我你是不是這樣的。我真的很腦。

我有一個幻想，我單手將浩然倒轉，看看可不可以將浩然腦內那些對同性戀者不潔的思想全部搖出他的腦袋。但這只是我的幻想吧。

他的轉變變得我好像從來不認識他，從前他的謙信、友愛、平等、

大方的品德都像江河一樣流入大海一去不返，現在我所認識的浩然是一個帶有有色眼鏡看一切事物的人，他已失去判斷能力，任傳媒牽著走，他的羊群心態已表露無遺了。

我很心痛，我痛並非因他沒有因為我的坦白而愛上我。

我痛是為失去了了一個好友，一個從校園一直視之為生死交的好友，只因我的性取向而改變了對我的態度，我感到悲哀。

我想假如我從來沒有向他提起我是同性戀者，又假如我沒有暗戀他，又假如我並非一名男同性戀者。但這一切一切都是假如，但話說了便不能收回。我更不後悔天生我便是一名同性戀者。

何況我並沒有因為自己是同性戀者而感到自卑，相反我感到驕傲，至少我肯誠認自己是一名同性戀者，並沒有做遺背良心的事，去做些掩眼法，去掩飾自己的真正性取向。

但除此外，有誰人可以教我不去想

浩然，又有誰人可以教我做些聰明一些的行爲，去改變浩然對同性戀者的看法。但無論過往是對還是錯，我想我應該跟浩然來個了段。不是跟他斷絕來往，便是每當他取笑我們同志時我便應說他的不是。

我真的不知怎樣做，是做還是不做，我的心很亂，真想找人談談，但除了浩然外我便沒有其他要好的朋友了。試問誰人可以教我不想他。



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Ghana

The Afro Lesbian and Gay Club now has 200 members, half of whom are women, according to reports from the International Lesbian and Gay Association. The group, which is officially called the Progressive Youth Association works for abolition of laws against gay sex and the release of persons imprisoned for homosexuality, supports isolated gays and lesbians, and distributes AIDS information. It offers visitors hospitality and information on gay life in West Africa, and seeks donations of AIDS literature and assistance to open an office, publish a newspaper and attend international conferences.

Thailand

A small bomb exploded, in May, outside a private AIDS hospice near Bangkok, the Thai police reported. No one was injured and damage was minor. But District Police Chief Colonel Somchai Chareuntrap said more serious violence likely will occur if the hospice continues to ignore neighbours' demands to move from the area.

Australia

The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Choir sang for Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating, United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and other heads of state April 26 at the opening of the International Conference on Global Diversity, reported *Capital Q*. Choir Musical Director Stephen Schafer commented, "It is a great honour to be selected, of all choirs in Australia, to participate in this event of international significance."

Costa Rica

A representative for one of the gay and lesbian hotels in Costa Rica has asked for support after repeated anti-Gay articles in two Costa Rican national newspapers. Both papers are stating that gay/lesbian tourism is naturally connected to prostitution and sex-tourism. The Catholic Church and other institutions like the tourist bureau (ICT) are trying to find legal methods of closing all Gay & Lesbian hotels down! The Costa Rican Supreme Court has decided that Gays/Lesbians are protected by Costa Rica's constitution and against discrimination and that they are allowed to create places dedicated to their own community! According to the Tourist Ministry the hotels have all legal permits and all are paying the necessary taxes.

Malaysia

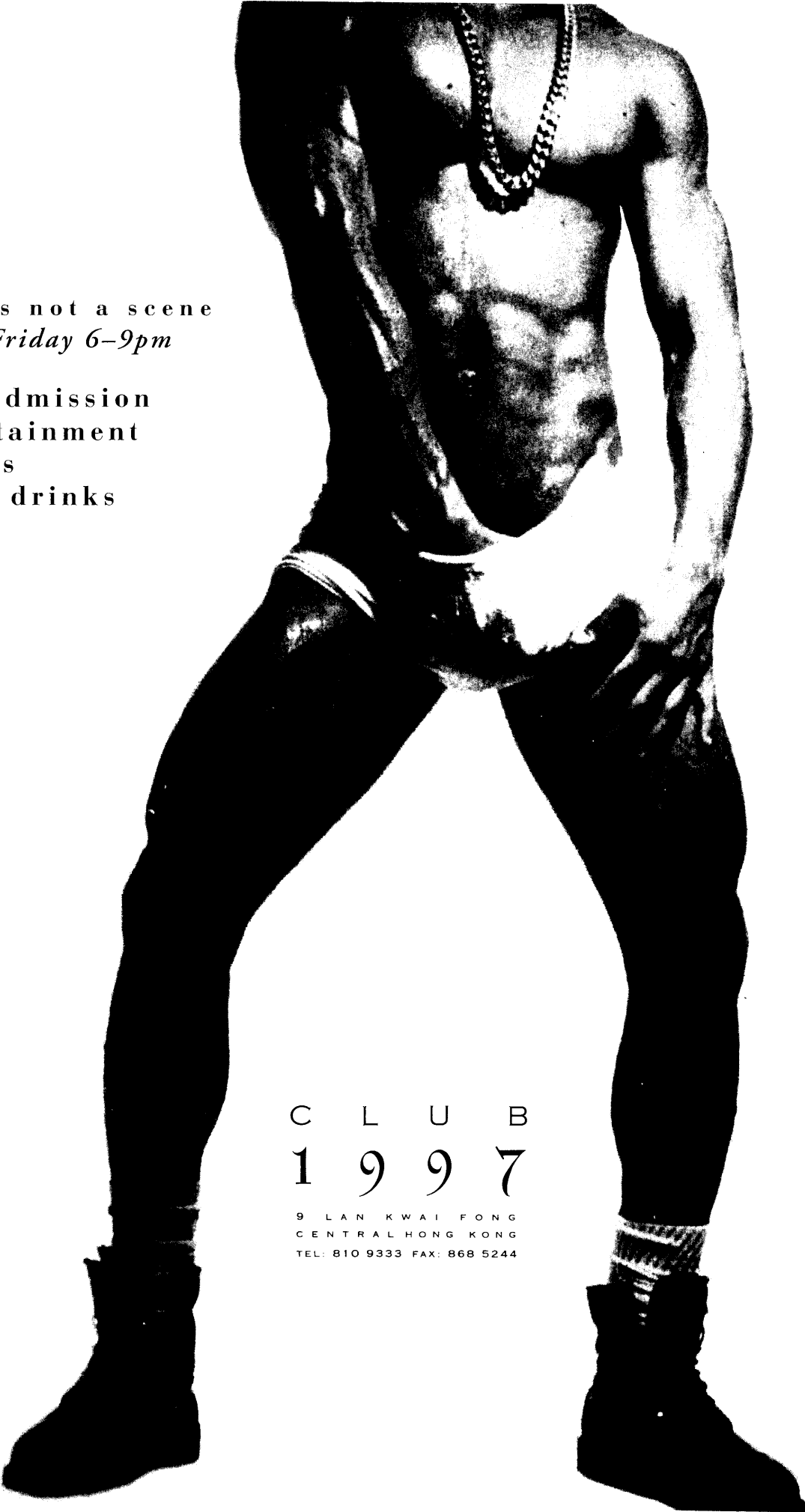
Petaling Jaya Selangor state religious affairs minister, Nahwari Hashim, has praised community based vigilante groups who assisted in the arrest of 7,000 people for 'un-Islamic activities', according to a report in a Malaysian newspaper. The Islamic Badar vigilante groups were formed last year, with volunteer members expected to report on 'immoral activities' in their neighbourhood. Director general of the Islamic Pusat Centre, Datus Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir, is calling on the groups to fight homosexuals. "We certainly do not want to see our country turning into another replica of western countries, with all the moral deterioration like adultery and homosexuality being accepted by the community", he told *The Sun*. Hashim said the participation of volunteers made it easier to know whether 'immoral activities' were taking place and allowed authorities to act faster. "Those who are caught are counselled and must attend religious classes besides being charged," he said.

U.K

British police forces will advertise in the national gay newspaper *The Pink Paper* to recruit officers and refute allegations of homophobia. "We want to dispel the myth that we are anti-gay, and advertising in this way is a step in that direction," said police spokesman Mark Lamb. "Society at all levels is increasingly coming round to the view that an individual's sexuality is no big deal and that's our view too," he said.

UK

London Cruisers have been tying used condoms to a tree in south London's Streatham Common until it "looks like a Christmas tree," police told *Capital Gay*. Local residents are not amused, claiming children have brought the prophylactics home to their mothers. Police have appealed to gay organisations to try to stop the foolishness and are threatening to launch raids if they don't succeed.



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Out about

HOSPITALITY

The Lesbian & Gay Hospitality Exchange International (GHEI pronounced Gay) are celebrating their 5th year this summer. The non profit making group, run as a part time hobby by an Air Canada flight attendant, is not intended as a dating network - or a lonely hearts club — instead it is a growing network of Gay people from around the world who are prepared to offer hospitality to others at no charge. These hosts, in turn, are received when they travel. Interested? Write to L/GHEI c/o Garnet Colly PO Box 612, Station C, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

\$ 5 0 6 , 0 0 0

1997 The #4 Mad Hatter's Party held 22 June raised \$506,000 - the best yet said Nicole - for the grass roots help group AIDS Concern. Post 97 had a gala dinner at \$500 a person for 100 guests. One of Sotheby's auctioneers sold off 25 hats with the most expensive a rubber glove hat going for \$100,000. The Welsh choir entertained the crowd before a 17 year old jazz singer Susie Wilkinson astounded the assembled crowd with her magical voice.

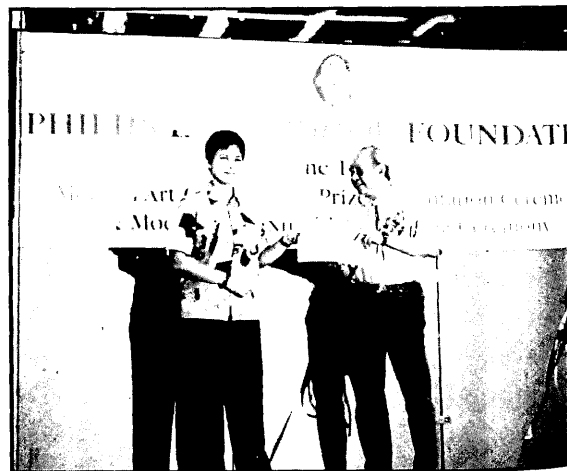
Y e a h ,

Yeah, Sure Ella To a school principal and executive committee member of the Hong Kong Association of Heads of Secondary Schools, talking about the 10% Clubs proposal to introduce being Gay in Hong to teachers and secondary school students, said in a recent interview with the *South China Morning Post* "we do not want to promote homosexuality and say that it is good. We don't want our students to pay particular attention to this group of people."

In the same week at this statement was made public, Karen Bergman counsellor and psychologist and Barrie Brandon, editor of *Contacts Magazine* did separate radio interviews for schools on homosexuality. The shows *Teen Time* are aimed at schools and paid for by the Education Department.

S u r e

And Man shall toil unto Eternity

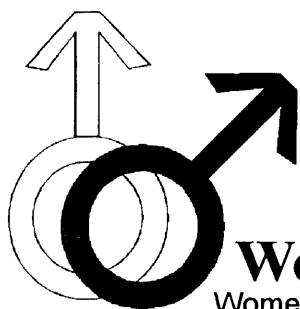


Mandy Boursicot's picture (front cover this issue) was selected as a finalist in the Philippe Charriol Foundation fine arts competition 1995.

Quote of The Month

Why is it that, as a culture,
we are more comfortable seeing two men
holding guns than holding hands?

Ernest Gaines III



Women who prefer Women. Linda Rosenbluth, BA and MA psychology, is running a series of 12 sessions for a small group of women who identify as being Lesbian. She emphasised that this is NOT a 'coming out' group. The meetings will take place at a Central venue, starting on 21st September. "The price isn't expensive with each session costing only \$300 for 2 1/2 hours, and "you will have the chance to meet other people who are in the same position as yourself and at the same time find out more about yourself," said Linda. Reservations /enquiries 2872 0441



the Gay Buddhist group meet every 2nd Sunday of the month at Club 64 Wing Wah Lane, Central, from 8 - 10 p.m. Julian Chan, the founder said "Our talks aren't just about religion, we also discuss AIDS, relationships and things that effect us all as human beings."

An Invitation *Fetish Fashion*

Hong Kong's first leather and rubber clothing shop opened last month. They have a great selection of whips and harnesses as well as some rather more conservative clothing. Go and see them their address and phone number is on page 5. Remember to tell them Contacts Magazine sent you!



Christian & Gay!

by Pastor Fred L. Pattison

We are known by the labels we wear or by those attached to us by others. In this article, two labels are combined that may surprise you: **Christian and Gay!** The label **Gay** draws both a positive and negative reaction. The label **"Christian"** draws a similar reaction. To combine these two labels into one - **"Christian Gay"** - creates considerable reaction, again both positive and negative.

Born again and Gay? The vast majority of evangelical, fundamental, and charismatic Christians reject the premise that it is indeed possible to be both Christian and Gay. Many Christians do not believe that a homosexual person can be born again and remain a homosexual. On the other hand, as born again Christian Gays, we believe that our homosexuality is God-given, normal, and natural.

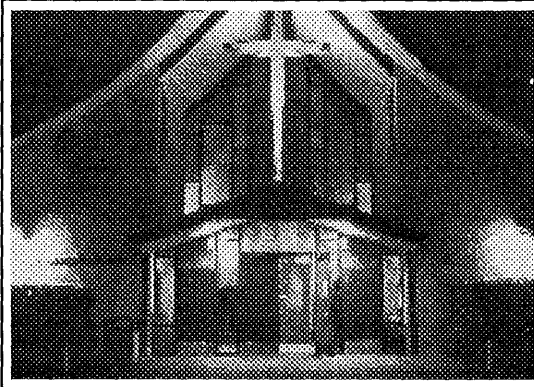
The salvation experience does not change one's sexuality. It does change one's eternal destiny and one's living habits. As Christian Gays, we are convinced that we are the people God intended us to be. We are not ashamed to let it be known that we are born again believers in Jesus Christ. Nor do we apologise that we accept the Bible as God's inspired Word, and that we hold to the basics and fundamentals of the historic biblical faith.

We do not believe that our homosexuality and our Christianity are in conflict with one another. We refuse to forsake Christianity simply because the majority of biblical Christians do not accept us as fellow believers. We know that God has accepted us! And that's what counts!

Anti-Gay ministries are wrong! Many Christians condemn and judge all aspects of homosexuality. Hence, they condemn all homosexuals. The tangent issue of the TV and radio preachers of the nineties is lashing out at both homosexuality and homosexuals. They erroneously teach and

preach that homosexuality is unnatural, sinful, and immoral, whereas the Bible says, "To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled." (Titus 1:15)

Be positive towards hetero Christians. As Christian Gays, we need to be positive in our attitude toward heterosexual Christians. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. We don't need to develop heterophobia (fear of heterosexuals and



fear of heterosexuality). Such fear is as destructive as homophobia (fear of homosexuals and fear of homosexuality.)

Our love as Christian believers must be our motivation in reaching out to fellow believers regardless of their sexuality or particular belief system. Christians have been called to love. This call has been issued by none other than God. A positive biblical faith can and will eventually overcome the negativism of the organised Church that continues to promote its homophobia.

The following are some positive steps we Christian Gays can take: 1. Display love for God and love for our neighbour as Christ commanded 2. Display Christian love for one another as believers in Christ. 3. Promote and maintain biblical standards in areas of morality, ethics, and sexual behaviour. 5. Establish and maintain relationships that are Christ-centred where faithfulness in a Christian covenant is demonstrated between two people. 6. Make sure that our

church continues to teach a sound biblical doctrine. 7. Witness to others the saving power of Christ. 8. Disciple and help equip Gay people to be effective Christians. 9. Show to everyone that a better way of living is found in Christ.

Is homosexuality sinful or perverse? Homosexuality is not sinful nor pervasive. It can be abused and acted out in a manner displeasing to God as happens also within heterosexuality. Homosexuality is simply a variation in God's wonderful work and world of creation. God delights in variety. Just take a look around you at the mountains, the desert, the flowers, the heavens, the animal world, and people themselves. God does not delight in clones. Homosexuality is not a mistake that God allowed to happen.

Why are some people homosexual while the majority of people are heterosexual? No one really knows the answer to this. We just know that homosexuality is natural and normal for some people in this world. Contrary to what the vast majority of churches believe and teach, homosexuality is not a learned behaviour. Those who believe that it is a learned behaviour are misinformed. People making this claim are seldom homosexuals themselves. We did not become homosexual, but rather one day discovered our homosexuality. Most of us went through a period of time fighting, rejecting, and struggling with who we really are. Gays do not choose to be homosexual anymore than heterosexuals chose to be heterosexuals. All of us, however, did choose to be Christians. We are Christians first, and then we are either homosexual or heterosexual. You are God's child. If you are a Gay person, don't be ashamed of who you are and who God intended you to be. God has a plan for your life. He loves you with a love that is without limits or reservation. It is an everlasting love. You are God's child. God has no orphans, no stepchildren. All believers, Gay and non-Gay, are full members of the family of God.

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Visibility

Anjaree, the lesbian feminist group in Bangkok that was founded in 1986, continues to grow and grow. An interview in the national newspaper, "The Sunday Nation", plus an interview in a new national magazine and on national television, has meant that more and more women in Thailand and Thai women living abroad know about the lesbian group.

The publicity has meant an increase in work. Anjaree rents a small office and recently found some money to pay a lesbian to work part-time. During one recent week, the office received 94 letters from women who thought until they read the magazine article or saw the television interview — they were the only woman who loved women.

Anjaree works to create a safe and supportive space for Thai lesbians. The group also sponsored the first Asian Lesbian Network conference, which was held some five years ago in Bangkok. Anjaree members, and other women in the Asian Lesbian Network, were also very active in getting lesbian issues on the agenda of the Asian and Pacific nongovernmental organisations' meeting, held in preparation for the UN women's conference in Beijing.

Unlike some countries, there is little physical violence against lesbians in Thailand. But the lack of positive information about lesbianism, and in particular, the pressure to marry, means that many women feel alone and isolated. A recent letter to Anjaree reflects this sense of invisibility. "Dear Sisters," the letter reads, "May I tell you something about myself? My name is Kaew, I have long hair and don't look like a tomboy at all, but I do feel ashamed to met my parents, my brothers and sisters or even my friends know about this. I dare not turn to anyone for advice. At this point, I feel lost, not knowing what to do."

This writer may be lucky because she lives

in Bangkok, and tend the monthly meeting, where or more lesbians crowd into the Anjaree office

could at-Anjaree twenty

organised a visit to a Buddhist temple near Bangkok, where a mural inside the temple depicted two women being punished for being sexual with each other. The mural was several hundred years old. The phrase 'len phuen' ('playing with friends') was traditionally used to describe lesbian sex. There are also references in the records of the royal court to lesbian sex. There were palace laws against concubines of the king and maids engaging in 'len phuen'. For a first offence, a woman could receive 50 lashes; a second meant her neck would be marked with a tattoo and the woman was forced to do embroidery. For

the third offence, she could be expelled from the inner court. It was not until 1900 that a law was made that prohibited ordinary people from homosexual activity.

This law was borrowed from the West. The law was abolished in 1956 because "there was no such case ever reported."

Despite this evidence, some Thais still think that lesbianism is something imported from the West. "I can't recall any Western influence that pushed

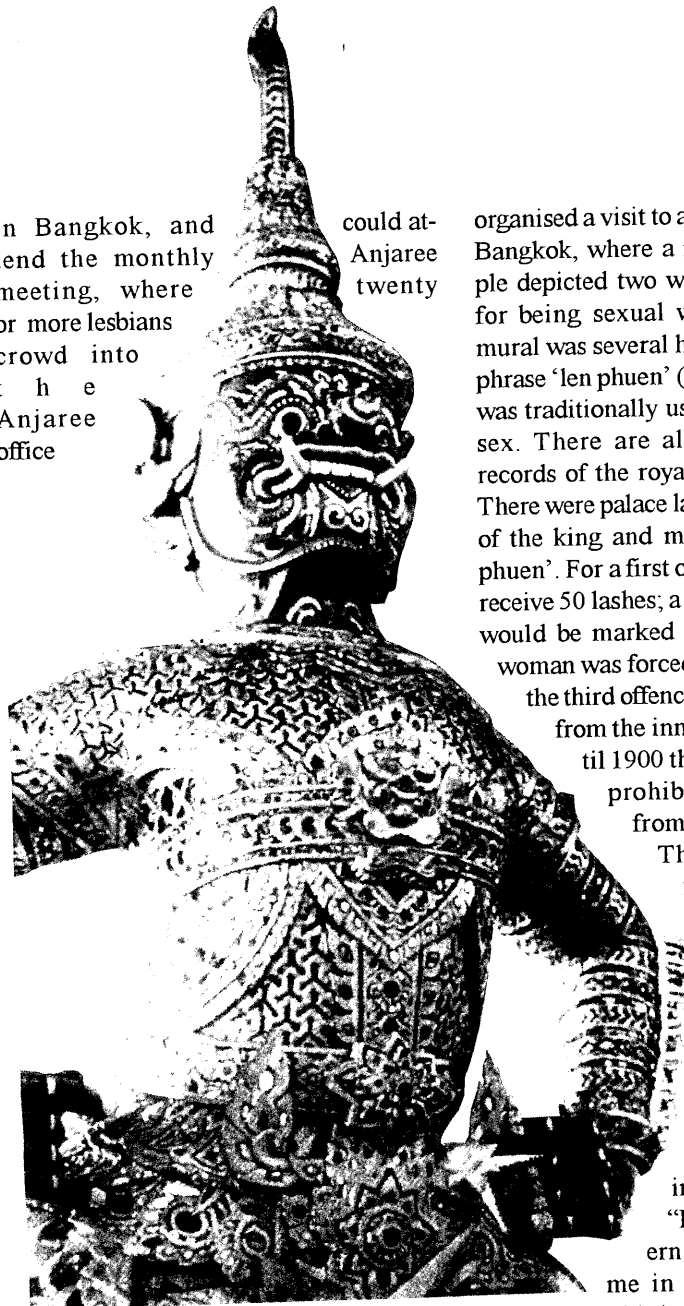
me in the direction of other women," said Anjana. "The only thing about sexuality I learned from Western films and novels was about relationships between heroes and heroines, men and women. I would say that any influence from Western culture led me to think that I should be interested in men, not women."

For more information write to: Anjaree, P.O.Box 322, Rajdamnoen, Bangkok 10200, Thailand.

to talk about issues ranging from personal identity to family to love.

"Most of us women who love women are obliged to live in disguise," said Anjana Suvarnananda, one of Anjaree's founders. "Many of our lesbian friends are obliged to hide the nature of their sexuality; sometimes without asking themselves why they need to do so."

There are many references in Thai history to lesbians. Several months ago, Anjaree



IN BRIEF...

1

In Buenos Aires, Argentina La Casa de las Lunas "House of the Moons," the first space created in Argentina for and by Lesbians, has opened its doors to all women. Lesbians and feminist women from different sectors of our society can come together in a place where they find an atmosphere of solidarity, where differences are respected and a degree of visibility is possible. This has given rise to many projects and activities, among them: attention to the psychological needs of lesbians, a group for reflection and study, expressionist workshops (plastic arts, music, writing, theatre, mime etc.). There is a library, languages are taught, we have movie discussions, and exhibitions of our artistic abilities. History is being made by lesbians in Argentina, and the best part is we all have our own page to write.

For Information write to: LAS LUNAS Y LAS OTRAS (Grupo de Lesbianas Feministas) MAIZ 1 1490 (1240) BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA

2

Britain's first ever marriage of a lesbian couple has been set for this month, made possible by the fact that one of the "brides" is a man who underwent a sex change.

The People newspaper published details of the planned wedding of Tracie-Anne Scott and Tina-Louise Dixon in London on June 28.

It said the couple were able to make history because Scott, a 38-year-old former merchant seaman who has been married twice before and has fathered three children, is still legally a man although he paid \$12,000 for a sex-change operation.

The paper quoted a Kensington and Chelsea Registry Office official as saying: "It's very unusual, but as long as one half of a couple is legally declared a man, and the other legally declared a woman, there is no reason why the wedding cannot go ahead."

Registry offices perform civil marriages in Britain for couples who do not wish, or cannot have, religious wedding ceremonies.

IT'S NOT GOLF!



How in the world can Ben Wright putt? That's what Martina Navratilova wants to know,

Remember Ben? Amazingly, he still works for CBS as its golf analyst.

Before the LPGA Championship last month, he was quoted as saying the LPGA was in danger of losing major sponsorships because there were too many lesbians on tour. Then, he was quoted as saying women have trouble swinging a golf club because their bosoms get in the way.

"The whole thing is so bizarre because everybody's denying that anything happened," said Navratilova, who is open about her own lesbianism.

"The LPGA wants it to go away. Ben Wright denies he said it. CBS wants it to go away. Now, they can't even find the writer who wrote it," Navratilova said.

"If he said it, all I want to know is: How in the world does he putt with that big stomach?"

Navratilova was at an HBO news conference last month so the cable network could announce she will be an analyst for its Wimbledon coverage this year. "I'm sure there are some lesbians out there on the LPGA tour," Navratilova said, "just like I'm sure there are some gay men golfers on tour." And so what! Nobody watches

the LPGA to compare coifs or check out hemlines, anyway. It's the golf that matters. "And women don't watch the PGA because John Daly is so good looking. They watch it because he hits the ball 350,000 yards," Navratilova said.

"But somehow, they talk about there being a problem as though lesbianism is something negative," Navratilova said. "If there are corporations out there that haven't signed with the LPGA because they fear lesbianism, then maybe we should examine that."

OUT TAKES: Navratilova says she hopes to be critical without being negative as a TV analyst. And HBO's Wimbledon anchor, Jim Lampley, says players won't dare question her.

"I think Martina will find she won't get a lot of flak because of her stature in the sport. Players will say to themselves, 'If she said it, it must be true.' And, I expect her to be candid because that's her personality," Lampley said.

Adds Martina: "I think you can be honest and blunt without insulting anybody." Which, of course, takes half the fun out of it, but each to her own.

Navratilova played doubles at Wimbledon this year with Steffi Graf, but not singles.

Media Watch

[Censored]

The New Man

[Censored]

He stood alone for over 18 months, unmolested indeed hardly noticed, in the foyer of a small office block in Hong Kong's Central district but now he must go because the censors have ruled he is too risqué.



is an insult to the sculptor...it also proves sex education in Hong Kong is a total failure."

The tribunal was set up in 1987 and handles about 12,000 articles a year. The censors who judge films, magazines and artworks have no formal training, no written guidelines but rely on their own ideas of community standards.

He stands erect, hands clasped behind his back, this broad-shouldered 'new man' with a strong and muscular physique like a latter day Greek Adonis. He is also stark naked—and despite being a work of art was forced to cover up his private parts.

New Man, a sculpture by the late and great British artist Dame Elisabeth Frink, is causing ructions because of the bits between his legs, known to most people as his genitalia.

He's now the subject of a fierce debate between those who police Hong Kong's morals, the Obscene Articles Tribunal (OAT), and upset and outraged art lovers.

Heated arguments over freedom of expression, common-sense and artistic licence lost out to the moral judgement of three people that *New Man* is too indecent to be shown in public with or without a fig leaf covering his genitalia

The Hong Kong Arts Centre came to the rescue by displaying *New Man* in its own exhibition hall. Oscar Ho, the Art Centre's exhibition director said that the display was to show "how ridiculous and arbitrary the tribunal's ruling was."

Existing laws and the tribunal's ruling

means that the same object is indecent if displayed in a public place, but perfectly decent in an art museum," he said.

"Can someone explain the logic to me?"

By displaying the sculpture in its original form, we want the public to judge for themselves" he said.

The *Eastern Express* conducted a straw poll the day after the exhibition opened at the Arts Centre. They asked members of the public whether they thought the statue indecent only one person in 25 did — and they weren't too sure.

Visitors to the exhibition were asked what they thought: Pip Cajiilg, an English teacher wrote: "This statue is not indecent. The OAT is wrong, its disgusting for them to say its indecent."

Angela Smith, a waitress wrote: "I've travelled all over Europe before I came here, and I can't believe a statue has to be covered by a fig-leaf because its ruled indecent."

David Clark a lecturer in Fine Arts at Hong Kong University wrote: "When we look at the sculpture we see the sculpture, but they (OAT) see the penis."

Peggy Lam, a legislator said: "The ruling

The OAT is a government body whose members are unknown to the general public. Enquiries to find out just who these people who decide what and when we can see things is met with blank looks or downright refusals to release the names of the adjudicators. Their meetings are held in secret and no reasons are ever given for their decisions.

What is known is the presiding magistrate is a Chinese male, 72 years old who sits with two lay members who are hand-picked by the Chief Justice. Their religious, moral or sexual beliefs are not examined for bias. A vast majority of their members (there over 150 all male members) have sat on the panel for over 5 years. Members are paid HK\$400 for each sitting.

Any 'reasonable' person who knows both English and Chinese and are Hong Kong permanent residents are eligible for the post.

There is no public consultation whatsoever, only the final results of the panels moralising are made public.

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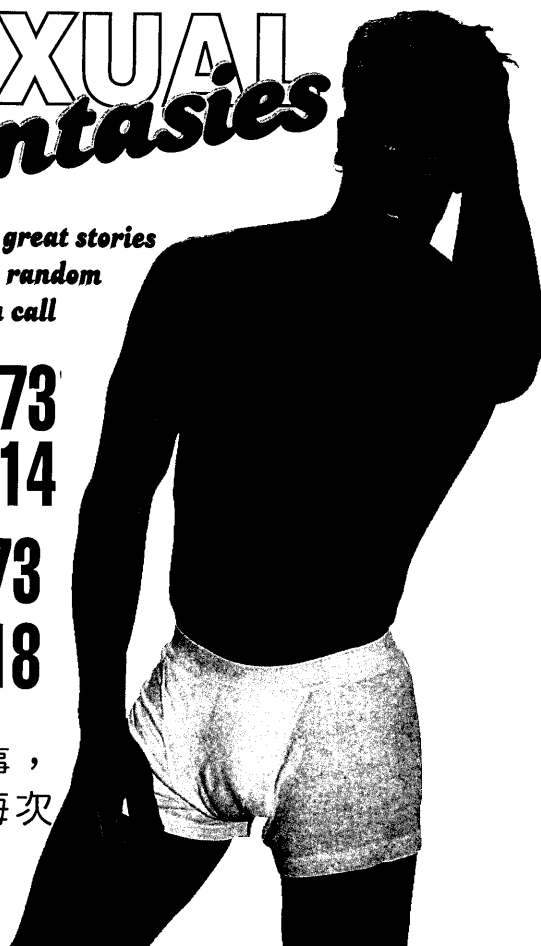
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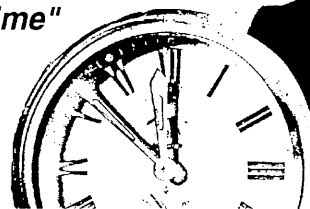
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Jimmy Somerville

Jimmy Somerville is having a bad day. Not only is the singer-songwriter nursing a nasty bout of the flu, he has also just locked himself out of his central London flat. He has sauntered over to an understanding friend's apartment nearby and is in surprisingly bright spirits when he calls to discuss Gay ghetto globetrotting and *Dare to Love*, his upcoming album on the London label. "As we speak, I'm praying that I haven't left the tea kettle on the flame," he giggles in his unmistakable Scottish accent.

During the four years since the release of *Read My Lips*, his previous solo album, the outspoken artist has lived in San Francisco, New York, and other urban areas with large Gay populations in an effort to get close to the roots of the post-Stonewall Gay liberation movement. In the end, he opted to settle down in London, where he found "you can encounter a wide variety of people in one spot."

"I have a hard time getting with Gay men in San Francisco," he sighs. "All of my friends were lesbians. I either found sanitised, scrubbed men who were trying

to 'assimilate' or men with 5,000 piercing. A balance between the two would have been lovely."

Somerville says he found more solace in New York City, particularly in the funky melting pot of the East Village. "That's where I found people who were striving to be individual without any fear or pressure to conform," he explains. "That's where I met musicians like [MCA recording duo] The Murmurs, who are going to give the mainstream the kick in the ass it needs."

With the release of *Dare to Love*, Somerville is hoping to do the same. The former Bronski Beat and Communards lead singer says one of his primary considerations when making his record was to fill the void he feels has been overlooked by the current crop of openly queer pop stars. "As a Gay man who is also a fan of music, I'm insulted when I see Gay and lesbian artists shy away from same-gender pronouns," he explains. "It's an unfortunate manipulation of honesty that collects Gay dollars without an even exchange."

This philosophy served as a launching pad for an album of intensely personal material Somerville describes as "the reflections of a Gay man who is embracing the

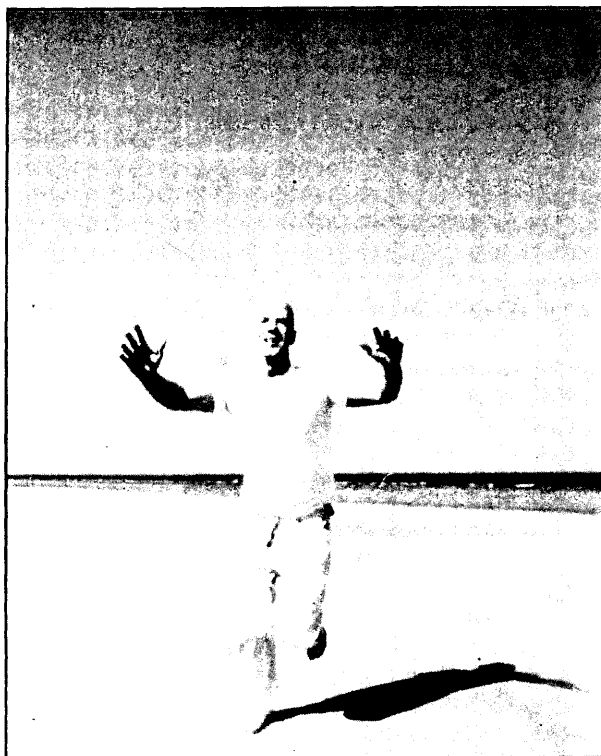


Photo supplied by Polygram Record

romanticism of relationships—with a healthy side order of sex." With Pet Shop Boys and Communards producer Stephen Hague at the helm, *Dare to Love* glides at a disco pace but has the extra added kick of carefree pop vigour.

Admirably "in lust" at the moment, Somerville explores the reality of relationships on "Heartbeat," the album's first single. The song challenges the idea of two people pledging eternal monogamy and examines the anxiety surrounding Gay mating rituals. "It's not realistic for people to expect to be together forever," he says. "We have far too many animalistic instincts to remain in such a closed situation for the rest of your life. The truth is your life will be fine with several long friendships."

Larry Flick is dance music editor at *Billboard* and contributes to *Vibe*.

It has to be a given that the overriding goal of the Gay Community is equal protection under the law. Without this protection, we are destined to the "fringes" of society. While this may be fun sometimes, it grows old easily. This is why we all hang on to our straight friends - our association with them keeps us in the "mainstream," and that is what is most important to everyone.

As we make progress in gaining acceptance by the mainstream, it becomes obvious that the most significant action we can take is to be visible. And we all know that this is perhaps the most difficult action.

But if every Gay man and woman told only their families that they were in fact Gay, everyone in the world would know a Gay person. It would then be impossible for even the bigots to oppress us because everyone would know that we are just as "normal" as everyone else.

So, if you have the chance to speak to the press, try to be prepared. The following are a few suggestions that may help you along.

Establish the subject matter, and make sure you are willing to discuss it. Don't feel obliged to talk about other issues you may be asked about, you have every right to refuse to do so. Some reporters attempting to cover a sensitive issue will arrange an interview under a different subject matter, and then guide the conversation into a risky area once they have gained your confidence.

Ask how the interview will be used. You have the right to know if your comments will stand on its own as expert advice, or if you will be matched against opposing views. You have the right to know how your information is to be used, but unfortunately you cannot insist that an entire line of questions be used, or give a dead line

for its use. The only way to prevent your comments from being used out of context is by knowing the reporter you are talking to. You have the right to be treated fairly and objectively in the press, but we know how often this doesn't happen. Even past experience with a particular journalist, or publication is no safeguard that you will be given a fair representation in the press.

During an interview you can make three kinds of statements, and you can/should specify which kind you are making. Feel free to make all kinds during your conversation. "On the record," means that you can be directly quoted. "Unattributable" means that your comment can be used in the media, but your name cannot be associated with it. "Off the record" means that direct quotation cannot be made, and the information is only for background purposes of the interview. Obviously the best way to make your point is on the record.

Develop key positive points that you would like to make, and make them repeatedly. Anticipate the point of view of the reporter, and make your points clearly with strong supporting arguments (prepare in advances by writing notes for yourself to use during the interview.) If a reporter asks

inappropriate questions that you don't want to answer, reply with these prepared statements - you are allowed to guide the conversation as well.

Help the reporter get his story, give him the angle or "hook." Give the reporter a strong quote, or previously unpublicised fact. This will make his job easier, and prevent him from digging for something that doesn't warrant highlighting. Take the point of view that you are a co-worker of the reporter. You both want to have an attention getting story. Don't become adversarial, or defensive, even if you are being baited. Lastly, don't get emotional at all as you'll certainly say something you will regret. The reporter wants to get the story, and if you make him angry by insulting, or intimidating him, he'll want to "get" you too.

If you are ever unprepared when a journalist calls you, feel free to take his number, and call him back when you are prepared. Don't hesitate to ask for help, or the viewpoints of your friends.

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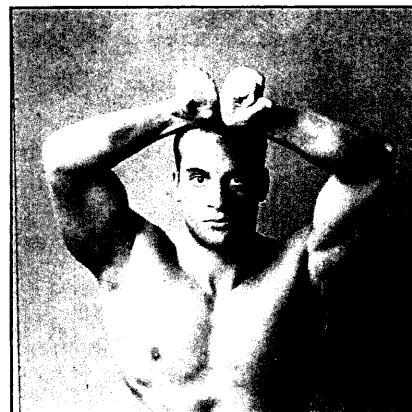
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LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

Sex

in

Bars and Clubs is All the Rage, But the Questions Are Even Harder Than the Men

By Eugene J. Patron

Education is not everything; I now know that. In every conversation I've had about unsafe sex among gay men, I kept asking why people aren't using the knowledge available to them. AIDS - condoms - protection. It's that simple — and that's the problem with creating effective prevention messages: people aren't simple.

Saturday night, it's maybe 4:00 am, but who knows. I'm on the dance floor among hundreds of practically naked gay men covered in foam, the latest sybaritic device of South Beach clubdom. The music's a sinewy, bass drenched house beat and the foam is every so sweetly warm with shared body heat.

The torso of the man pressing against my back feels so good, as does his dick as I slowly move it around my ass. I will not let him enter me, I know this, but he keeps trying. It's a subtle, sensual game, one we're both enjoying until he realises it will go no further. Sure to find a more willing customer, he moves on, leaving me at the

threshold of desire, between wanting to be wanted in the most innate, gratifying way I know, and sticking with my resolution to be safe.

Most of the men around me are engaging in safer sex — jerking each other off, fucking between thighs — but others are fucking without condoms. Sitting on raised lifeguard chairs at each end of the dance floor is a hunky looking "monitor" who takes to squirting with a water gun anyone he can see having sex. It's a playful, and unsuccessful, attempt at enforcing club policy in accordance with Florida law prohibiting sex in public places or private commercial establishments. Each man here is his own law giver and enforcer and the choices we make are our own.

At a time when the rate of HIV infection among gay men is rapidly increasing, rather than levelling off as was predicted at the end of the 80s, the issue of personal choice is now topic #1 on the AIDS battlefield. Moreover gay men are having to confront a new reality surrounding behaviour as it relates to HIV transmission, as well as AIDS as a cultural facet of the gay community.

HIV is still the same killer virus it was

when it first struck more than 15 years ago. Only today we have given it a new face, one of grudging familiarity rather than of revulsion.

In the last year virtually every gay bar and club in South beach Miami has created some sort of backroom, or promotes a night when the lights are turned off and sexual activity is permitted, even encouraged. Yet this is in no way a local phenomenon. Two years ago THE NEW YORK TIMES ran an article titled "In the Age of AIDS, Sex Clubs Proliferate Again." The story is the same in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington and other centres of gay life: unabashed sexual activity is back in a way not seen since bath-houses were shut down in the early to mid 1980s as AIDS grew into an epidemic.

That 15 years after the AIDS epidemic began people should be looking for expanded sexual freedoms should come as no surprise. Preserving a "code red" crises mode for years and years is unrealistic. At some point the light had to turn to yellow. The big questions why does it seem to have gone to green?

Many prefer "personal responsibility" to personal choice, given that it HIV trans-

mission is a dynamic between two people and the actions of one may affect the other. Moreover the how and why of transmission may relate to the surrounding environment, which throws the issue of responsibility in the laps of bath house and club owners.

Where South Beach is perhaps unique among gay communities is that it is not sex clubs and bath houses where the sex is; it's in mainstream gay clubs. As a resort destination, we are everyone else's escape. Visitors who may go to their local gay bar once or twice a week back in Cleveland, will go out every night of their four day stay in South Beach and they want action. Local bars and clubs, in competition with each other, try to meet that demand and sex is what's hot.

In recent months the THE VILLAGE VOICE, THE WASHINGTON POST and National Public Radio have all weighed in with major articles and programs about gay men having unsafe sex in bath houses and sex clubs. Straight society, even at its most critical of homosexuality, has long had a fascination with gay sex. And gay sex is, after all, a cornerstone of gay politics, since who we are and how society treats us, has, for better or worse, always related closely to the issue of who and how we fuck. Unlike Ebola, which cuts down its victims with a nonsense biological viscousness, HIV is as much at home in the political arena as in the bloodstream.

"Guliani Wants to Watch you Fuck" reads the bold type of a letter from the AIDS Prevention Action League (APAL) of New York, referring to moves by that city's mayor to do away with doors to cubicles and private rooms in sex clubs, bath houses and porn theatres. Rallying in opposition to such, the APAL advocates the value of sex clubs as "venues for promoting safer sex," which work towards "sustaining a sexual culture in which we can survive," and being places where "men can act responsibly."

But are men acting responsibly? During the May conference of the American Psychiatric Association in Miami Beach, the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists held a discussion session on gay bath houses and sex clubs. The moderator, in favour of closing down any venue where gay men can readily have sex, complained that in the name of "personal freedoms" sex "had become wide open again."

The problem with personal freedom, he argued, is that it is killing us. In a club environment, gay men "disassociate" from themselves, very often via drinking and drugs. They remove their sexual selves from the rest of their lives and act as if immune from consequence.

Asking for government and the police to close down bars and clubs where gay men have sex is in effect saying we, as gay men, cannot look after ourselves and need someone else to do such. Still, many men feel that if the heavy hand of the law is what it takes to stop the spread of AIDS, so be it.

Yet at the most basic level of biology, HIV, for all its ability to trigger political clashes, is immune to the law. It operates according to opportunity. And that opportu-

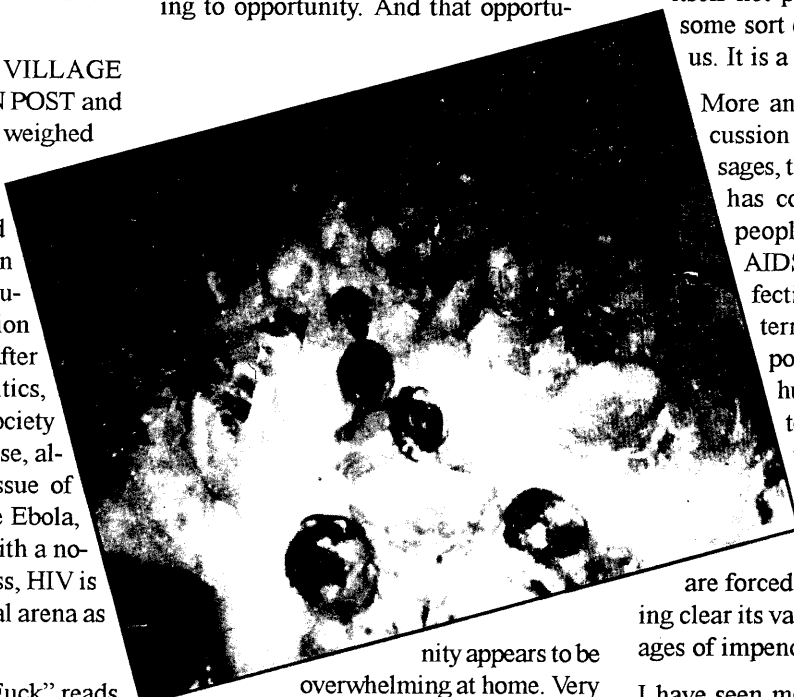
Why did I come so close to slipping that night in the foam, but didn't? why were there men there willing to fuck and get fucked without protection? It is their choice to make, but why make a choice that can be so deadly?

HIV and AIDS has become so much a part of our community. "You must presume everyone is HIV positive and protect yourself," goes the safer sex message. But the flip side of that is that AIDS appears then as the normative and being negative abnormal. In the process of having fought so hard for the rights of those who are positive, to show them as the spirited people still full of life that they are, have we forgotten that HIV is a virus? HIV is in itself not political movement or even some sort of spirituality which unites us. It is a deadly matter of biology.

More and more as part of the discussion about HIV prevention messages, the issue of aversion imagery has come up: using pictures of people with advanced stages of AIDS to dramatise that HIV infection will eventually result in terrible illness and death. As powerful a tool as showcasing human suffering may turn out to be, I cannot help be disturbed by a fundamental philosophical question: what does it say about gay men as a community if we are forced to preserving life, to making clear its value, by showcasing the ravages of impending death?

I have seen more rainbow bumper stickers on cars in South Florida than just about anywhere else, and rainbow flags and freedom rings are certainly not in short supply. Yet so many who will wave a rainbow flag in your face and present themselves as the picture of gay pride, will not use a condom. Even the building of a multi-faceted gay community, one extending in many directions beyond bars, one overflowing with banners and marches, is not enough if gay men do not personalise that pride and find a wellspring of it within themselves.

Pride by itself will of course not protect me from HIV any more than love will. Safer sex and a condom will. There is no simple answer as to why some people are safe all the time and then slip, or why others are unsafe almost all the time. People are complex. But HIV test results are simple: you're either negative or positive.



nity appears to be overwhelming at home. Very likely more gay men are having unsafe sex in the privacy of their or someone else's home, than in public.

It is often thought that a club environment, with the presence of alcohol, drugs, strippers, foam, or simply the abundance of so many men looking for men, offers more chances for a personal to "slip" in safer sex practice. Yet a corollary to the fact that many gay men confuse sex with intimacy, is that many gay men confuse intimacy with unsafe sex. All too often gay men, at home with one partner, regard NOT using a condom as demonstrative of "trust" or "love."

Unsafe sex is unsafe sex wherever it occurs. With 1 in 3 or even 1 in 2 men in many gay communities HIV positive, it only takes everyone to slip just once, to make infection rates skyrocket. And that's what's happening in New York, San Francisco and South Beach.

AIDS

Being Welcomed in Faith

Charles Scheidt lay still in his hospital bed one Sunday surrounded by anxious friends and visitors whose voices hummed in gentle prayer. Members of the clergy offered blessings and Communion, their words promising eternal life even as Mr. Scheidt's sunken eyes and reed-thin frame hinted at imminent death.

They had come not to say goodbye, but to welcome him. Six years after he left the Roman Catholic priesthood, Mr. Scheidt joined St. John's Episcopal Church, longing for the sense of spiritual community found only among the people of a congregation. He was too weak from AIDS to attend a morning service where newcomers were received into the faith, but members of the Greenwich Village congregation came to him that afternoon to witness a man reconciling his life and death with his faith.

Encircling his bed, they prayed along as Bishop James Ottley, the Anglican observer to the United Nations, received him into the Church. "Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons," Bishop Ottley asked, "loving your neighbour as yourself?" The group responded for him: "I will, with God's help." The sight of Christ in others inspired Cameron Dubes to arrange for the bedside service. He had attended confirmation classes at St. John's with Mr. Scheidt and had been moved by the former priest's determination to rejoin

a congregation, seeing it as a testament to the faith they were seeking. "I believe grace has been working with us," Mr. Dubes said, recalling the emotions that stirred within him one night when he glanced at Mr. Scheidt in class. "Talk about Christ, I looked at him and he was being crucified. It's all around us, and we continue to wait. Here is this man being crucified. He is along on the journey with Christ."

He didn't leave the Roman Catholic Church, Mr. Scheidt told friends. The Church left him. Ordained a priest in the Brooklyn Diocese in 1983, Mr. Scheidt served in parishes in Park Slope and Queens Village until 1987, and soon after went on medical leave. Mr. Scheidt, 38, said he had left the church because he was gay and because he did not like a ministry that he said expected him to be more of a business manager than a pastor for his parish.

For several years, he served as a chaplain with Dignity, a group of homosexual Roman Catholics, as well as working with Integrity, a similar group for Episcopalians. But organisations aren't parishes, so earlier this year he began looking for a congregation. The Episcopal church appealed to him because it celebrated the sacraments and felt more welcoming than the Roman Catholic Church, which he said made him feel unwelcome as a gay man with AIDS.



N Story

as Life's End Approaches

By David Gonzalez

"He loves the Roman Catholic faith and tradition," Mr. Dubes said. "But he did not feel the love and acceptance. He wanted to find a family and parish he could call home." The Rev. Lloyd Prator, the rector of St. John's, first met Mr. Scheidt around Easter. "He explained his situation and how he did not have much longer to live," Father Prator said. "He knew St. John's was a place that welcomes people with AIDS. We had people come to St. John's to find a place to die." Mr. Scheidt began attending the weekly classes for converts in September, surprising Father Prator during some of the lessons and discussions.

"He knew more than I did," Father Prator joked. "He corrected the mistakes that I made." But he also reinforced some ideas about his classmates' conversions. "He has reminded us of the real vocation of being a Christian, which is to minister to the sick and the suffering and the needy," Father Prator said. "In doing so, we minister to Christ. He helps us keep in mind those things that are really important."

A grey sky hung over the East River on Sunday, Brooklyn's church spires visible through the window in the hospital room where Mr. Scheidt had been for three weeks. A respectful hush hung in the room as Bishop Ottley offered the sick man Communion. Friends looked on with faces that mixed sorrow and serenity. Afterward,

they came to his side one by one, some offering gifts while others offered a squeeze of the hand or a kiss on the forehead. Father Prator presented him with a certificate commemorating the occasion.

In the hallway, Bill Ankenbrock, a friend of Mr. Scheidt, reflected on what he had just witnessed. "I like to think the spiritual journey does not come to a stop," he said. "This is the next signpost in our spiritual journey."

The journey would be short.

By Wednesday night, Mr. Scheidt could not recall the Sunday service. He knew he belonged to a congregation: a small family, really, one he said was accepting, loving and caring. "I like having a community," he said, his dinner tray left almost untouched before him. His voice halted, his eyes rolled back underneath sagging eyelids and he fell silent. A friend's voice stirred him alert.

Always religious, he said his relationship with God had changed. Sometimes he felt an emptiness. He recalled the writings of St. John of the Cross, the Spanish poet and mystic. "God is truly present to us only when he is truly absent," he said. "I feel the absence. 'As his life was slipping away, all that remained was the longing of the spirit.' 'The promise of a new community.'"

The next night, he died.

Language

Getting
it
right

Ask most people how to talk about someone who is HIV positive and they'll tell you that it's someone with Aids. As AIDS is an acronym for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome capital letters should always be used.

Using the right language is an important step in talking to people with HIV or AIDS. If we understand why argues Danny Wong we'll get it right and in so doing be offering positive support to those with the virus or AIDS.

People living with AIDS (PWA's) this term is far better than AIDS victims or AIDS patients.

AIDS victims has a close connotation with defeat and passivity; people living with AIDS are actively fighting and are not passive victims.

AIDS patients assumes that the person is receiving treatment. In fact many PWA's are undiagnosed and untreated.

Innocent victims. We should all try never to use this phrase as it implies that some PWA's are guilty. Accusations of guilt compound the discrimination that burdens PWA's and hampers the efforts to educate the public about AIDS.

We all share the effort of bringing the realities of AIDS before the Hong Kong public in a way which is accurate, objective, non-judgmental as helpful as possible. Let's make a start my using appropriate language.

With thanks to the HK Quilt Project.



In Praise of Older Men

I am replying to the reader who last month (June/July issue) I don't think that it is natural for people to seek out others within their own age range.

I am a 29 year old male and my soulmate is 68. I could not imagine my life without him. I met him four years ago and we have a wonderful life together. He understands that sometimes I need a little variety, so about once a year he will set me up with a guy he knows will interest me, which means a man 50+ years old. I know he needs variety, too, so I set him up with men my age who are friends mine. When they find out I am gay and living with an older guy it sparks a curiosity in them and my partner gets the benefit.

Mark Swift Lantau

And...

Perhaps some people know that there is far more to life than sex, and realize that often people with severe age differences have many differences in interests, outlooks, philosophies, etc.

Lots of folks like "older" guys; because one younger guy that you might be interested in shows no interest, is no reason for a blanket condemnation.

I find it far more closeminded to suggest that others don't know themselves well enough to understand what they want and who they want it with.

A Joke

Thought you might like this joke I heard recently. Two women, are walking down a street at night. As they approach one house, they can hear yelling, screaming, and crockery being smashed. When they pass the house they can see inside where a man and woman are having a nasty argument.

One of the walkers out in the street leans over and kisses the other, and says, "Those mixed marriages never work!"

Name and address supplied

The Rainbow Flag

Some time ago you ran an article on the Gay Flag. I have been thinking and, of course, we can have any multi-colored flag as a symbol of Gays and Lesbians and call it the rainbow flag.

But the symbolism will be much more forceful if it really is the real rainbow, you know the one set in the sky as a promise to people, that we use as our symbol.

The real rainbow is traditionally and practically best explained by seven colours. When we fight for our rights and use a flag symbol, we should use the best symbol there is and not use any kind of colorful stripes put together.

The colours of the real, physical rainbow, which can be observed in the sky, are (with my suggested symbolism):

1. Red for warmth, tolerance and love
2. Orange for happiness and health
3. Yellow for people still in the closet
4. Green for people fighting for Gay Rights
5. Blue for gays out in the cold
6. Indigo for being indignant about discrimination
7. Purple for the courage of PWA's and their friends.

Bjorn Sweden

(Ed; We have yet to see a Rainbow Flag in Hong Kong!)

Name and address supplied

Coming Out at work

To make a flat statement that you are Gay or Lesbian, especially if your colleagues do not know you very well at work context, invites comment on their part. In that case it is much easier for them to be homophobic.

Conversely, it takes more energy on their part to fight assumptions, especially as you have hopefully already shown that you are as well adjusted as they are. So, could one conclude that not coming out at work is still a form, perhaps mild, of internalised homophobia?

Jonathon Tsang, Central

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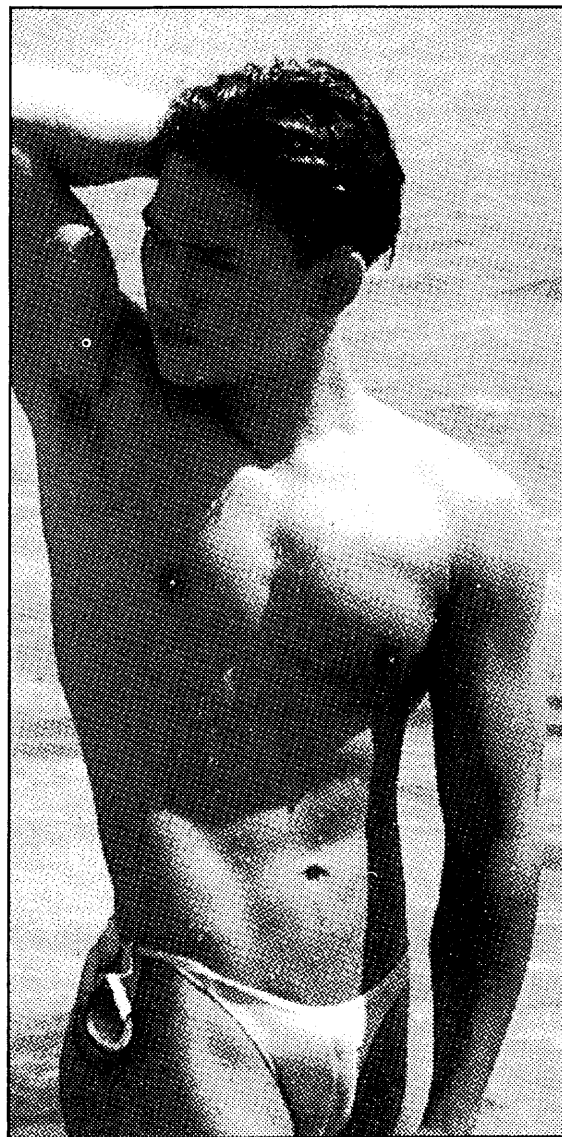
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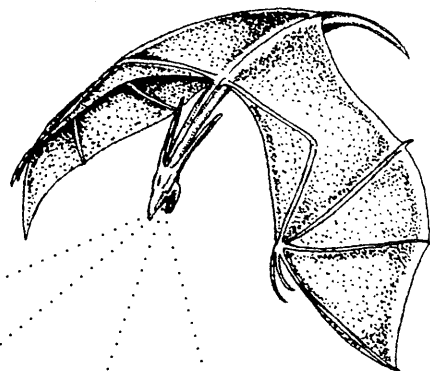
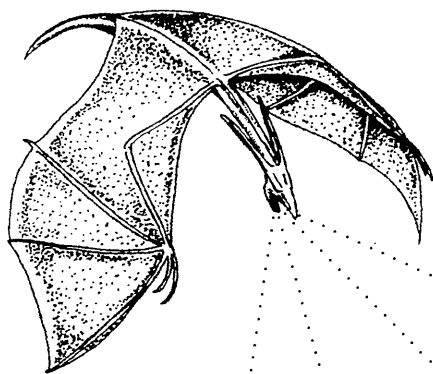
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DRAGON

By Danny Wong

Gay life is jumping and thriving, at the moment, in Hong Kong. But what happens when Red China takes control in a little over two years? Danny Wong files this special report.

The frantic frenetic pace in Hong Kong is reflected in the rush for Yam Cha (that most delicious of Chinese meals) every morning. This is the richest remaining British colony, although most locals refer to it as a territory. It doesn't have the same colonial colouring, and is much more politically correct — something people are just about getting their heads around.

Imagine 6 million people in a very small area; and you'd imagine somewhere somehow there'd be rather a lot of Lesbians & Gay men. You'd be right and their lives are lived more openly now than ever before. But will they still be come 1st July 1997? The first day of Chinese rule.

People arriving here for the first time are almost always struck by the incessant noise of the place from the market traders selling food the beggars description to the foul tasting thick black tea, that the locals

insist is good for health.

Business in Hong is booming, as are property prices. Hong Kong now ranks 2nd in the world for the highest property prices. This is a point to remember when booking hotel rooms!

Buildings less than 10 years old are being torn down to make way for new taller buildings. A building of more than 25 years is considered something of a landmark — the Hilton Hotel recently closed after 27 years and there were enough news reports and gnashing of teeth to be heard over the water in Kowloon.

The vast amount of construction work taking place demonstrates that economically, at least, little is set to change. But politically these are troubled times.

In the last 5 years much to China's displeasure Britain has tried to turn Hong Kong into a modern Western political entity. It's laws have been updated and institutions strengthened in the hope that the territory's local politicians might be willing to stand up to their new Chinese masters.

Ironically it was this process that led to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1991. The age of consent is 21.

Since then in true Hong Kong style a new economy has emerged. As male dominated as any other but this one is decidedly pink.

According to Ernie Corpus of Horizons, in an interview with *Out This Week*, the "Hong Kong's Gay scene is just beginning to take off". "Lesbians have actually been very discrete. In fact Lesbians do not exist". For Gay men there are 3 or 4 clubs, 5 Karaoke bars and about a dozen saunas spread throughout the territory".

Despite the off key singing in most of the Karaoke bars — tourists are recommended to bring their own ear plugs — the Gay scene is thriving. The increasing tolerance shown towards Gays in the West has filtered down through the territory in the last three years. Young Gay men are coming out on the scene in increasing numbers. There's even the first signs of a Gay village developing in Central.

A scene just like any other city. Only Hong Kong is not like any other city. It has a

time limit. And beyond 1997 there is only uncertainty.

China has a long tradition of courtly homosexual love. It's even said the last emperor was Gay. But although there are no specific laws against homosexuality in China today's communist leaders tend to frown on the practice.

Gays caught in public are charged with hooliganism or other social order offences.

The Chinese president said recently that party workers must guard against corrupt ideas from the West and promote patriotic education and traditional culture. China welcomes Western investment but not modern western notions, like individual freedom.

Gays in Hong Kong want the government to raise homosexuality as a human rights issue before the Chinese take over. Eddie Wong, of the 10% Club said "We want some protection after 1997". "We don't know what will happen, so we want legal protection".

There is very little the Hong Kong Government can do; although China is committed to running a one country 2 systems, at least for the next 50 years. It hasn't yet said who will make up Hong Kong's new government or what the laws will be.

Eddie Wong said that "if the Chinese government rescind the law on homosexuality it will make very big waves in Hong Kong".

But is the Gay community in Hong Kong strong enough to resist such pressure or movement?

Some Gays in Hong Kong feel they have little option but to adopt a conciliatory approach; stressing how they pose no threat to their future Chinese overlords. "China thinks that they only worry they have of something developing into political group. Gays in Hong Kong as in other parts of Asia have learned to blend in to whatever situation or environment they find themselves in. So that China won't find them a threat.

In other words if they remain discreet they just might be allowed to get on with it.

Others in Hong Kong like Barrie Brandon, the editor of the Gay magazine *Contacts*, think that this attitude is naive. An Englishman who moved to Hong Kong several years ago points out that everywhere else in the world Gay communities get organised several years after a social scene develops.

"Unfortunately in Hong Kong we don't have several years to wait. It is extremely important that the Gay groups here understand and realise that we are on a rapidly descending time-scale".

We need to take the necessary action to be strong enough to be able to present a united front to China

Barrie Brandon is pessimistic about the future of Gay Hong Kong. He said he thought *Contacts Magazine* might ultimately be forced to close. And that the bars and clubs wouldn't be tolerated for very long once the Chinese took over.

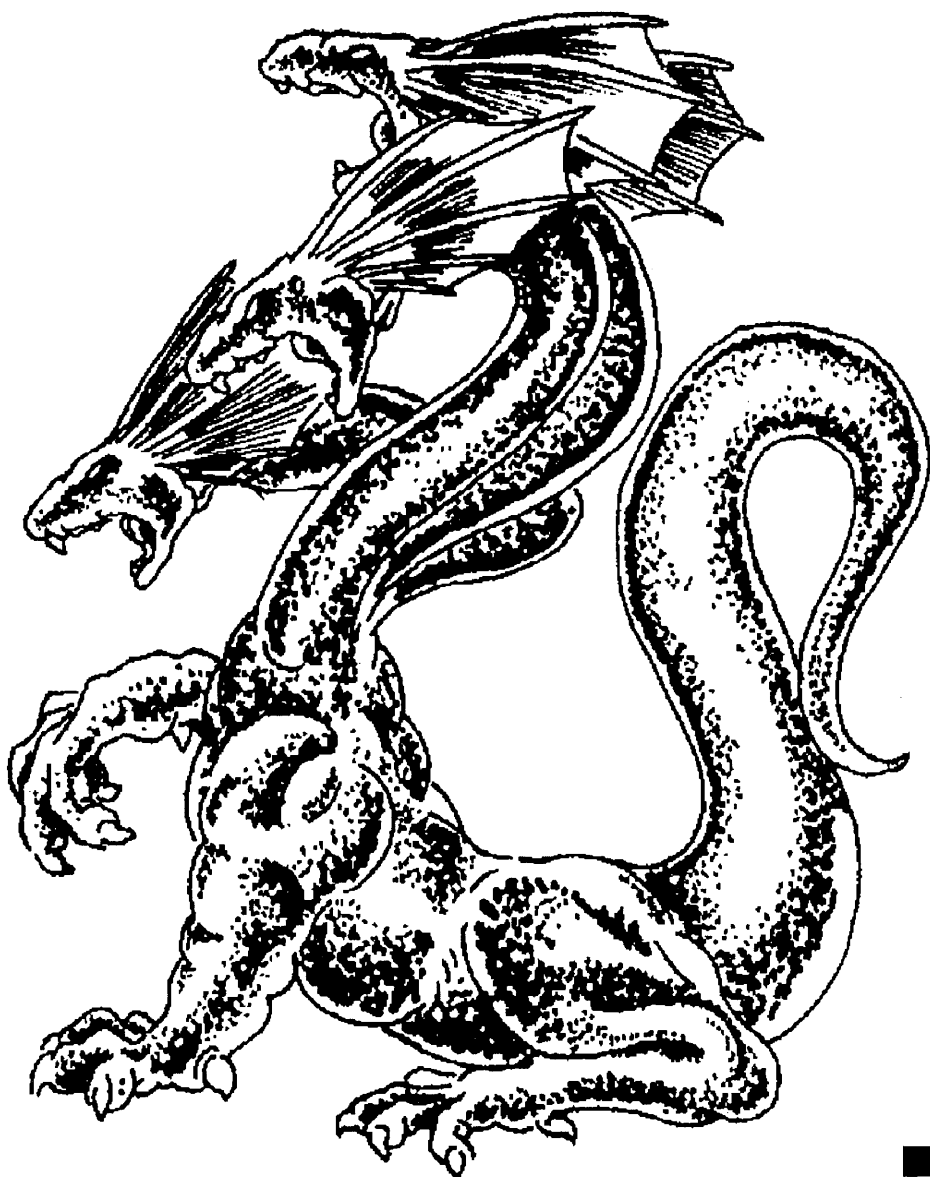
Lawyer and Legislator Anna Wu also fears for the future. As the mover and shaker behind the proposed Anti-discrimination Bill Anna thinks the malaise moving in the gay community at present typical of Hong Kong. "In the run-up to 1997 and beyond we are basically talking about freedoms; freedom to pursue the life that we want. That is under a great deal of

uncertainty and a great deal of people are suffering from depression because of it".

In the bars and clubs' people are consistently talking about the future of Hong Kong and what it will mean for the Gay community. Barrie Brandon "It's a fact of life if you've never had something you can't miss it. If you have had something and that thing is taken away, then you miss it". That might be the flash-point at which the Gay movement actual does solidify and says Enough! And maybe that would be the start of an Asian Stonewall.

Given the Chinese government's handling of the Tienanmen Square events in 1989 there is no guarantee of how they would deal with any civil unrest in Hong Kong. Maybe they wouldn't be as careful as the New York Police Department outside the Stonewall Inn 26 years ago.

As bad as the Karaoke singing is I can't help feeling that future generations may look back and long for Yesterday.





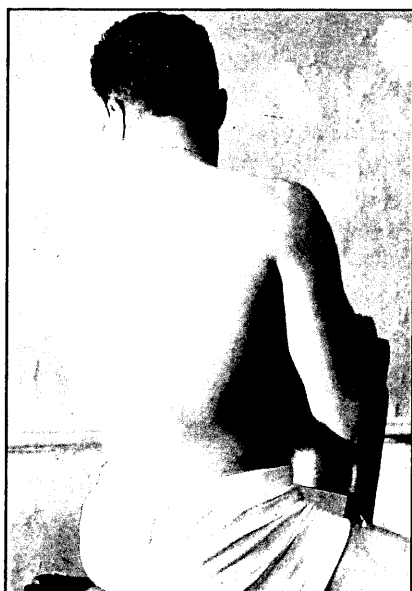
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If you don't mind sharing your thoughts with a tall, slim, inexperienced, 25-aged, Chinese guy. Please write to me. Box 178

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A man of 26 years. Want to love and to be loved. Page me if you want to know me. 112891 a/c 262

Chinese, 36, slim, non-smoker, likes squash, jogging, tennis, travelling, swimming. Needs over 37 non-smoker for relationship. Please write with photo to PO Box 25831, Harbour Bldg., Post Office, Hong Kong.

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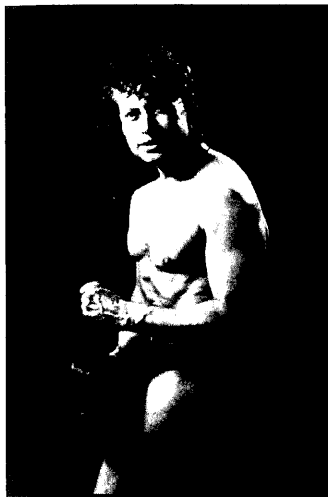
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Chinese, 31, Singaporean. Hobbies: Weight-training, Art, musci and travelling. Seeks Asian men 30 to 40 years old for friendship and pen-pals. Please write with photo to: Lum, Toa Payoh North P.O.Box 0796, Singapore 9131.

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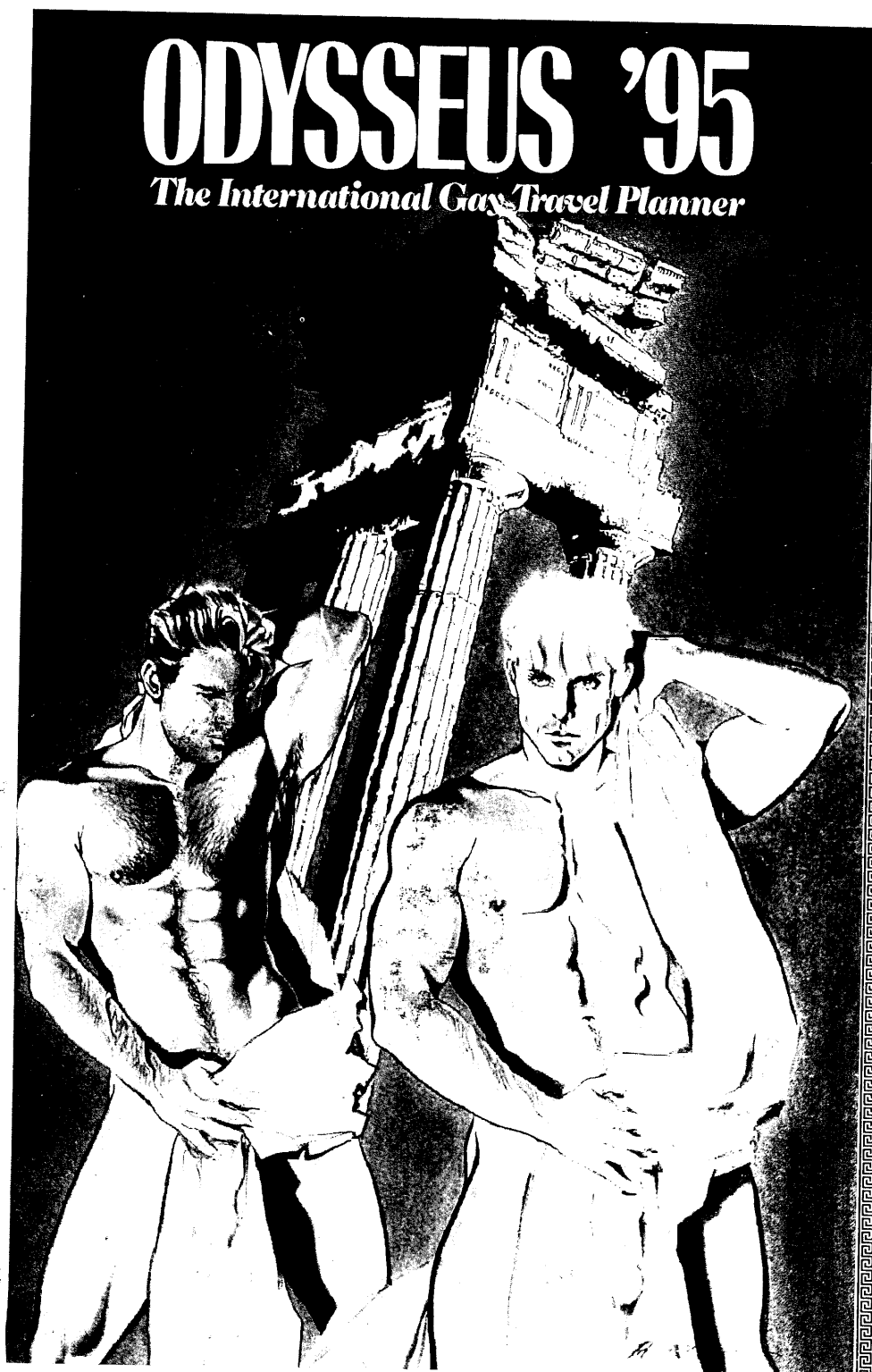
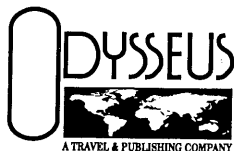
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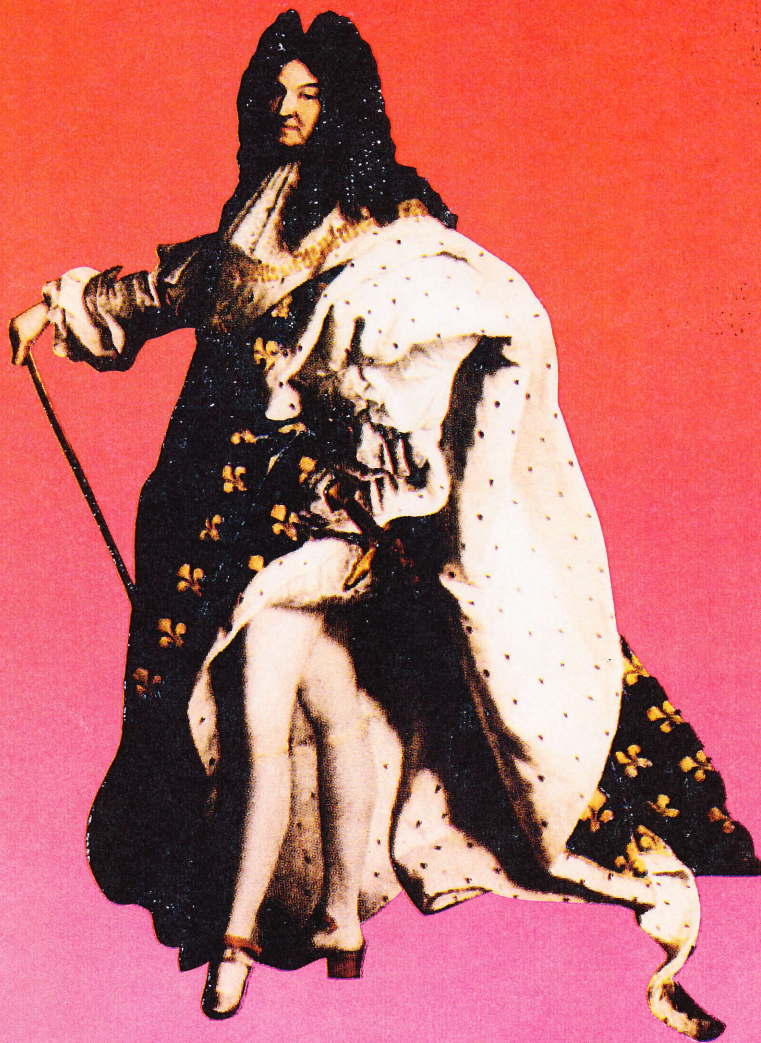


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